

## GROWING OUR FUTURE WITH FOOD SECURITY

Summer is the season when we first get to taste that just-picked juicy peach or the crunchy cucumber fresh from the garden. Local food, the importance of B.C. agriculture and food security is in the news a lot these days.

Food security? What do you mean? We need to lock up our food? Well not quite - food security means much more than that. Food security exists when all community members are able to get safe, personally acceptable food through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone.

Prices are going up and many people cannot afford to buy healthy food. The cost of food is rising for a number of reasons including higher gas prices and dry growing areas. It is important to source locally grown food whenever possible, whether it be from your garden or a local farm. Local foods help reduce our dependence on food that travels far distances.

If you are affected by the rising cost of food or if you want to help build food security in your community, there are a number of things you can do:

- Start growing your own food! Even if you don't have a green thumb, there are many fruits and vegetables that are easy to grow. Start small with one or two patio pots with cucumber or tomatoes and go from there. Ask friends or neighbours who garden for some tips.
- Sign up for a plot at your local community garden or [start a community garden](#) if you don't have one close by.
- Consider joining a local [gleaning program](#). Volunteers who help pick fruit and veggies get to take some home!
- Support local farmers. Shop at farmers markets or fruit and veggie stands.
- Get involved with a food policy council or food action group. These groups are involved in projects and programs that help build food security.
- Learn about your local government and how they are supporting food security.

For more information about how Interior Health supports community food security, visit <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourHealth/HealthyLiving/FoodSecurity/Pages/default.aspx>

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